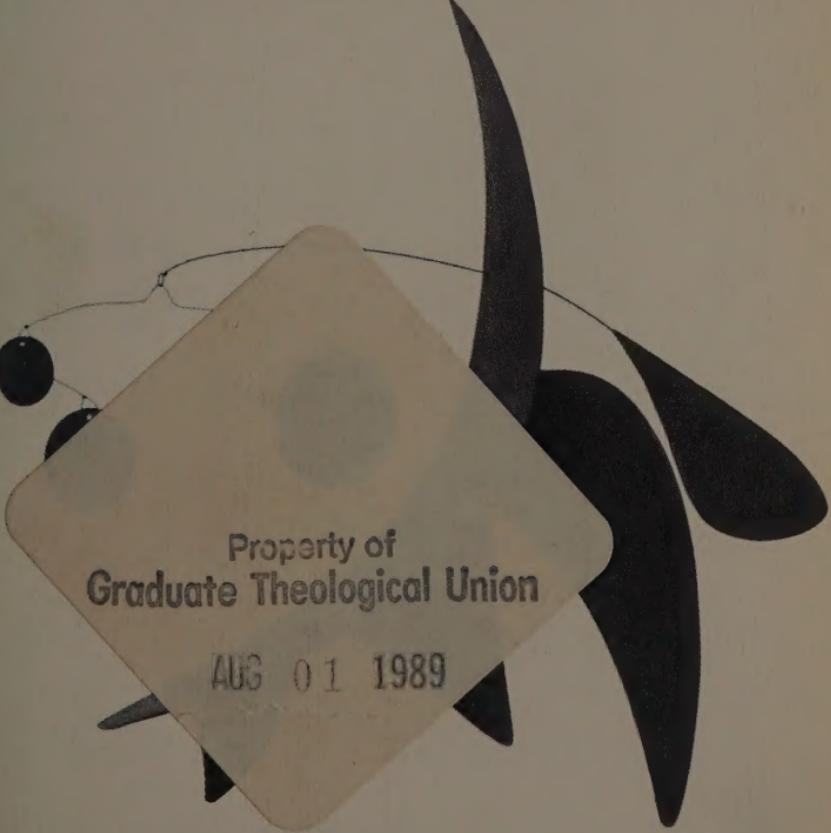


LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

AUGUST
1989

Flexibility &



Property of
Graduate Theological Union

AUG 01 1989

STABILITY

For Growth in Faith and Mission

FEATURES



A Changeless/Changing God—And Us
Martin E. Marty

Steadfast Promises *Corinne Chilstrom*

Good Changes *Inez Schwarzkopf*

The Whirlwind and the Still Point
Julie A. Beck

If the Word Fits *Elna K. Solvang*

The Color of Flexibility *Barbara Jurgensen*

A Psalm of Praise *Karen McClandon*

A Solid Footing *Trudy Y. Smith*

A Caring Country *William A. Dudde*

The Power of the Family *Susan B. Lidums*

Breaking Our Addictions *Linda Daniels Block*

DEPARTMENTS



Contributors

Bible Study: A Light to My Path—Psalms

Selfcare: Walking—Keeping Astride of Health

Foremothers of Faith: Nancy Smith Palladeau

Shorttakes

Women of the ELCA: Mission Area Updates

Meditation: The Good Earth

Lutheran Woman Today (ISSN 0896-209X), a monthly magazine for all women, is developed by Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and published by Augsburg Fortress, 426 S. Fifth St., Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440. Lutheran Woman Today editorial offices are at 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631.

Copyright © 1989 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Duplication in whole or part in any form is prohibited without written permission from the publisher. Printed in U.S.A.

Second class postage paid at Minneapolis, MN, and additional mailing offices. All subscriptions: group rate, \$5.00 (\$7.50 big print edition); individual, \$6.50 (\$10.00 print edition); outside North America add \$3.00 for postage. Single copies, 80¢ (\$1.00 big print edition). Braille edition available free; audiotape edition, \$18.00 (\$10.00 visually impaired). Payable in U.S. funds. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Lutheran Woman Today Circulation, Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1209.

CONTRIBUTORS

John E. Marty offers his insights on a "merciless/changing God" in this issue. Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, pastor, and author of a number of books relating faith to politics, Dr. Marty is Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago.



Rev. Barbara Jurgensen draws on her years as a pastor in the inner city to write "The Color of Flexibility: A Black Perspective." A frequent contributor to *Christian Woman Today*, Pastor Jurgensen is currently assistant professor of ministry and contextual education at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio.



Rev. Julie Ann Beck ("The Whirlwind and the Still Point") grew up in southwestern Minnesota and graduated from Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul. She currently serves as pastor of Braham Evangelical Lutheran Church, Braham, Minnesota, and is a member of the Northern Conference of the West Metropolitan Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.



Schwarzkopf ("Good Changes") continues to welcome change in her own life. She served as director of community organizational development for the ELCA during its first year, traveling each week from Minneapolis to Chicago, enjoying, she says, "the best of two worlds." This year she is at home in Minneapolis, writing and studying. She and her husband, Lyall, have four children.





A Changeless/ Changing God— and Us

The Women of the ELCA, in its constitution, present two seemingly contradictory principles: one stability, the other flexibility. Viewed independently, both seem valid and valuable. One can easily see the folly of an organization stuck in a rut, unable to do anything differently from the way "it's *always* been done." Likewise, it is clearly foolish to "blow with the wind," and be everchanging.

So too with the people who make up our organizations. The sins of stagnate stubbornness and wishy-washy fickleness are equally clear.

There is an obvious tension between the need for change and the importance of stability in our lives and in our organizations. At what point does this tension become

a healthy one?

When is there not enough—or too

much—
of either
change or
stability?

Martin E. Marty

As Christians, we are called "examined life" in which we consider ourselves in terms of the radical change we call repentance and the fine-tunings we call "growth in grace."

As believers, we also try to discern some signals from the character of God, and that character is clearly revealed in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ—changing?

Right off we bump into a biblical text, Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever." Just a few pages later we come across James 1:17. It refers to God as "the Father of lights, in whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." Those two messages seem to clearly suggest that those who would be like Jesus should try to be "the same" all the time.

Still, a Bible verse or two

—even if there aren't many like them—leaves one uneasy, puzzled. They do not seem to square the biblical picture of a God who seems to be changing constantly. "repents" and takes a different course; God creates a people, or creates a *new person* where the old sin had been. Creating not only changes the old order, but it also changes the one who creates. God always seems to have a "Plan B" when humans mess up the divine "Plan

As we look closely at the biblical pictures of God and God in Christ, some begins to emerge. Just what is about God that is "changeless"? scriptures often speak of God as having *hesedh* (or *chesed*), which means "steadfast love." This is a love based on a divine covenant: God sees to relate to us, and we can depend on God.

That image works for human affairs, too. Thus marriage is a covenant. What we do not want to change in marriage is the fact that the partners can "count on" each other. "Counting on" is what has to be changing. But beyond that, marriages need change. They are built on the surprise of falling in love,

Churches, clubs, organizations, and friendships similarly include, at their best, people who have the ability to be constant and steadfast—yet changing and flexible. I like a book title by the French thinker Gabriel Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*. That is exactly what we seek. "Creative creativity" is jumpy, nerve-wracking. We do not know how to relate to the person who is emotionally here one moment, there the next. On the other hand, "faithful fidelity" can be plodding, unimaginative, demanding and dull.

What makes it possible for God to show "steadfast love," yet display "changeableness"? The stories about God reveal a core character, one that allows for what we might call "many-sidedness." The people we admire also tend to have a "core character." Say the name of



**Churches, clubs,
organizations and
friendships include
people who have the ability to
be constant and steadfast—
yet changing and flexible.**

sustained by unexpected gifts, gestures. Inflexibility, stubbornness—"being set in one's ways"—threaten marriages.

someone whom everyone in your circle knows and admires, and you will be describing someone whose inner being, whose core, is quite clear to all.

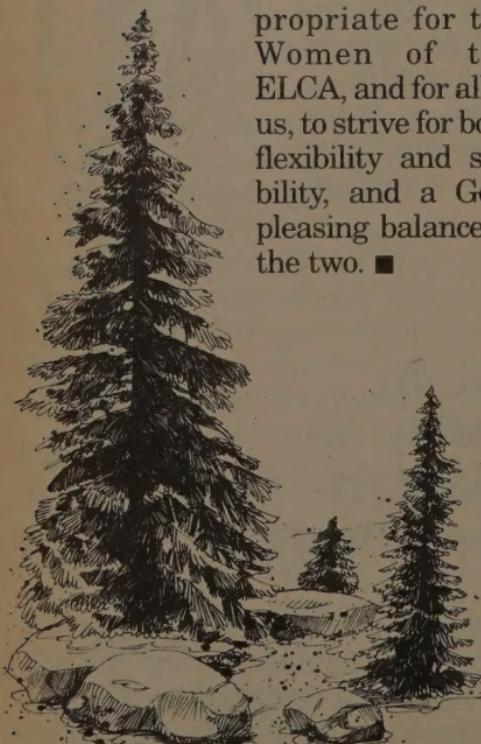
Yet that person interests you all precisely because she or he continues to grow and remain fresh and interesting.

Brittle reeds snap in the wind. Pliant and flexible ones bend with it, and do not snap. They survive because they are strong and deeply rooted. Marcel speaks of personalities which undergo "crispation"—that is, they are crimped, curled and shriveled, like a dry autumn leaf. The life which draws upon the very life of God, however, is the opposite of "crispated"—it is evergreen, new, vibrant.

The healthy tension we seek is constancy combined with change. This model of growth and rootedness is found in our creator God. We see in Christ a God who is "the same" but who, finding us in different circumstances, comes to us ever-chang-

ing: firm enough to guide us, flexible enough to forgive.

And so it is appropriate for the Women of the ELCA, and for all of us, to strive for both flexibility and stability, and a God-pleasing balance of the two. ■



H

ave you ever left an elaborate list of "Ifs" for a baby-sitter? And were there times when unexpected things happened, things for which you had left no "Ifs"?

Given the task of tending God's world, our lives are often a little like that of a baby-sitter with an inadequate list of "Ifs." There simply are no prescriptions for all the predicaments and pain that we, or those whom we care, will encounter. We can plan and prepare for the predictable and expected changes in life, but how do we cope with the unexpected ones? Sometimes we are caught off guard and overwhelmed. In our bewilderment, God seems to have disappeared.

For all the many changes and chances of life, there is something that does not change. The promise of God. The Word. The One who "is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). God's promises do not fail. God is *for us* and loves us. So, "I am sure that neither death, nor life, . . . nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus . . ." (Romans 8:38-9).

Saving, gathering up the remnants, God intervenes so that "we

STEADFAST *Promises*

Corinne Chilstrom

may be lost" (John 6:12). God has a way for our lostness to die. Christ and to raise us daily as new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). In our rising, God calls us powerfully into the ongoing creation of new life to others.

we have been accepted and by God, we are called to bring substance and love to others. As we have been comforted, we are called to comfort others. As we have experienced new possibilities in our brokenness, God helps us see new possibilities for others. Our mission is to be the very body of Christ for others. At raising, the enduring love of the stability we can count on.

Do we really believe this drastic news? Are we ready to witness the miraculous love of God in word and deed? To grasp the stability which brokenness is crying out for? When we are ready to share it with others?

The challenge for such mission is where—yes, right among the sons and brothers of our own Lutheran family. The stories I share are of desperate need for the stability of enduring love through difficult times.

Marlys looked troubled as she said, "I never believed in divorce. I never thought it would happen to me! We were the ideal family. And then it all fell apart." Guilt. Shame. Bitterness. It was written all over her face. Painfully, she said, "I don't go to church very often anymore. Church is the hardest place to go."

We can plan and prepare for the predictable and expected changes in life, but how do we cope with the unexpected ones?

John's eyes engaged me. Anger. Confusion. Sadness. Glistening tears willed not to fall. Late teens. Probably homosexual. "I want to be a part of the church," he said, "but I feel unwelcome because of the way I was born. There is no one in my church I can talk to and confide in. I'm tired of living a lie. I don't know if I have the right to pray. I just want to be accepted."

Marian's son is a drug abuser, and life for the whole family was out of control. Sunday mornings, as usual, she went with her family to worship. But one morning as she took hold of the door, she turned and went back home. "I can't go in! It must be my fault. I must be a terrible mother, too terrible to be with others who have it all together," she said.

Sue is at home with young children, well-educated and an avid reader. Concerned about the environment, she speaks with fear in her voice of the depletion of the ozone layer and all the throwaway plastic-foam cups. Acid rain killing trees. Forests being slashed. Garbage piling up. She feels so alone in her worries, almost hopeless.

Ann's letter came unexpectedly. I'd known her in another place. Intelligent and able. I admire her abilities. Scarred from many years of silence, she recently uncovered the wound of being molested as a child by a trusted family friend, a church member. She was later abused again when she threatened to tell. Several others were victims of the same abuser. No one ever told. Shame. Guilt. Silence. Therapy now is long and arduous. Distaste for church, and understandably, "mixed feelings" about worship.

What all these people have in common is isolation and feeling far from God. They're members of our church, yet they feel alone.

Luther said, "In adversity, the flesh thinks God is angry. So comfort can never be spoken enough." In the

difficult times, more than ever, need to receive the good news of gospel, the very presence of Jesus. a child said, "I need Jesus with skin on." We all need someone to listen to us, speak the Word of hope, comfort us,

I remember one long sleepless night of crisis when my husband was on the other side of the country. As soon as I dared dial, I called a friend. "I have to see you before you go to work. God seems so far away and I can't pray," I said.

We met at Perkins. Crying over a muffin and coffee I poured my heart out to my friend. As we parted, she said, "Today, you don't have to pray. I will pray for you." I learned about the body of Christ that day.

***As a child said,
"I need Jesus with
skin on." We all
need someone to
listen to us, speak
the Word.***

Worshipers gathered on Sunday morning in Namibia. Namibian Christians know a lot about the Word of Christ. The church was packed overflowing. Outside, after filling all the shady spots, the people

hours in the hot sun near the ows to be part of the service. e Namibian people know a lot t suffering. Having endured for 23 years during the illegal pancy of South Africa, Namibia's n know nothing else. Burying nts and siblings is normal for

***Be transformed
by the renewal of
your mind.
Get a fresh vision.
New thinking.
New planning.***

t in their suffering they find re- l and courage and hope in ng God together. We saw it as outh choir got up to sing, 75 g. Harmony and joy. Harmony nergy reaching for freedom. In nergy we sensed both plea and e.

thers and sisters in our ELCA round the world are in situ without easy answers, without "lo" list. How do we stand solid ur sisters and brothers in such tuations—and they with us? tempted to despair, how can gether, be faithful?

neone has said there are two of hopelessness: To presume God should do, or, to despair,

assuming that God will not fulfill his promises.

No, don't despair! But "be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:2). Get a fresh vision. New thinking. New planning. God is for us, intervening so that we "should lose nothing" of all we have been given (John 6:39).

God has new possibilities for what is scattered and broken. Even out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, out of the ash heap, God is able to raise up a "new creation." The love of God wills life, yes, abundant life, and calls each one of us together in Christ's body, the church, to come and share in God's life-giving work of such creation! We heard that message echoed in the songs of the Namibian youth choir.

God is our anchor in the midst of pain and uncertainty. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). In the steadfast, enduring love of God there is healing. God is for us. And through us, God offers healing. ■

Corinne Chilstrom is a writer, speaker and pastor who has blended her studies in nursing, pastoral care, counseling, and in Word and sacrament ministry. She also shares in and supports the ministry of her husband, Herbert W. Chilstrom, bishop of the ELCA.

GOOD CHANGES

Inez Schwarzkopf

"I know it must be really hard to let us all go our own ways wherever those ways may lead us, but you do . . . I feel like I am looking for something. Maybe it's just more information on what's out there, but I do know I wouldn't be happy sitting behind a desk right now . . . I'm just really thankful that you understand. Or at least if you don't understand you do a good job of letting me live my life without being tied to the strings of the two of you so tightly that I can't move . . ."

Our daughter, Dana, was writing from Pueblo, Mexico, where she is teaching fourth-grade in her first year out of college. She was wrong about one thing. Letting her and her brothers and sister go their own ways isn't nearly as hard as it would be to see them settling into stagnant or rigid ruts of attitudes, outlooks and activities.

In Mexico, Dana has grown profes-

sionally, in language skills, and her understanding and appreciation of another culture. Her faith has matured as she has examined her life long assumptions in the light of a religious expression very different from that with which she grew up.

When I was her age, I was already a mother. And sometimes I would wish that children could remain forever somewhere between the ages of three months and six months . . . after they learned to smile and before they started to crawl. Of course, they had actually done so, it would have been tragic.

Growth is change. Growth without change is impossible. Change that leads to growth is exciting, stimulating and good.

We recognize that fact in babies as we eagerly and proudly greet the first teeth, first steps and first words. We even push change in children, urging them impatiently to "grow up," marking milestones of maturity with praise, gifts and family rituals.

But something happens when children become adults. Good habits often



ruts, opinions solidify and we to fear and resist change, to give up the good that we even for a possibly better un-

among the most delightful I know are older women for continuous change has meant unending growth. The way they greeted and used change throughout their lives has given a wisdom that lets them enjoy end of this century as much as

Something happens when we become "adults." Good habits often become ruts, opinions solidify and we begin to fear and resist change.

enjoyed the beginning. One of my friends showed me the of cards she received on her birthday. "Did you get them from all your old friends?" I asked.

"Goodness, no!" she answered. "They all died a long time ago. I had to make new ones."

Older women have lived through tremendous changes. Many of them are immigrants, living the ends of their lives in a second language. They remember their first autos, first electric lights and first refrigerators. Their lives have spanned major wars, the transition from a rural to an urban society and all of the attendant social changes. Those who welcomed change in their younger

years seem most adaptable to old age. Because change keeps happening. Decades beyond retirement, these women are still adjusting to new living arrangements, new responsibilities and new activities. The wisdom they have gained lets them tolerate, accept and even welcome new experiences with good humor, whether those experiences be the great-grandchildren's musical tastes or liturgical variations.

I have learned from several "senior saints" that just as our relationships with family and friends grow

and change, so does our relationship with God. Their glorious adventures of daily communion with God in prayer, study and Christian conversation brings them a deep and rich intimacy with the Holy Spirit and opens their minds and souls to a greater appreciation of God's power and might.

Openness to change is vital to emotional and spiritual growth at any age. A new baby, an older friend with a zest for life, or a young adult exploring expanding horizons encourages us to value flexibility in our own life. ■





The *WHIRLWIND* and the *STILL POINT*

Julie A. Beck

Erna sat before me propped up by pillows in the hospital bed. As I listened, she recounted some of the difficulties she'd encountered in her move from her home in the city to an apartment in a community of 1000. There had been struggles and ad-

justments as the new apartment became her home. Hildur, a good hearted neighbor, was a key factor in Erna's settling in. She had taken Erna under her wing, inviting her church and involving her in community life.

One and one-half years ago, Hildur also had been among the many who welcomed me to the community. I moved from a compact two-bedroom apartment into a large three-bedroom parsonage. I moved from a young congregation with 800 young people to an older congregation with a total of 668 members. I moved from a setting where many parishioners didn't know where I lived into a setting where everyone knows where I live.

Transition was made easier for both Erna and me because of sensitive, concerned neighbors. With these gentle, loving folk, change would be much more difficult and lonely.

*Diligently she pours her time,
her energy—herself
into the task at hand.
Quietly she serves
not asking for recognition
or applause.
Steadfastly she gives,
and loves,
and laughs a little . . .
Touching many subtly,
Touching me.*

As I sat with Erna, we talked about the new change now taking place in her life. The doctor was recommending that Erna move to a nursing-care facility for a while. Logically, she understood this counsel; emotionally, it was a blow. She didn't want to begin, again, building new relationships.

gled with the inner voice telling that people go into nursing-care ties to die. I, young and independent, argued that for her, skilled was a choice for life, not death. In 1977, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. At that time I wasn't more anxious to deal with the reality of my physical health than I was. I didn't want to leave my familiar surroundings and family to receive medical care any more than I did. I couldn't control how my disease would change my body or life any more than Erna could. Though I couldn't comprehend exactly what Erna must be going through, I could see that we're both alive because we both did what was necessary.

Let's take turns. First you be a whirlwind and I'll be the still point. Then, I'll be a whirlwind and you be the still point. That's what friends are for!

Women with very different experiences, yet many common denominators. None of the coping skills I mustered are unique to us. They are life skills, gifts from God we developed over a lifetime to allow us to respond creatively to changes. These life skills enable us to bend and flex with the changes each day brings. They are the key which we are able to redefine ourselves, reevaluate our situations, and keep living with joy and thanks-

These coping skills are used not only by individuals, but also by communities and organizations as they interact with change. Key to coping and growing is flexibility and the ability to use change, whether positive or negative, to enrich our lives and the lives of others.

There might always be a scar or blemish, reminder of weakness and pain past. But healing time brings us to the point we forget it shows.

As I write, Erna has been in the nursing-care center for almost two weeks. It sounds as if she will be able to come home again soon. The first time I visited her there she was so ornery I was glad I was her pastor, not one of her daughters! We talked about how Scripture gives no promises that life will be easy for the faithful. And we both agreed that what she was going through was certainly not easy. Together we agreed that in the midst of change, faith provides her with stability and a centering point.

In the midst of things beyond Erna's control, God's ability to receive both her praise and her pain provides balance. Throughout Erna's life, one thing that remains constant, familiar and stabilizing is God.

That same faith in God which provides stability and focus for Erna also provides for us.

Within the innermost depths you go ever with me. You touch, You smile, Your voice encompasses me, and I know I am loved for eternity. ■

Note: The poetry interwoven with the narrative in this article also is the work of the author.—ED.

If the Word Fits . . .

*"A word fitly spoken is like
apples of gold in a setting of
silver." Proverbs 25:11*

Elna K. Solvang

How true we find this message of the wisdom writer to be. There is real joy in using or hearing "fitting words." Right along with the joy, however, too is the frustration, misunderstanding and offense that can result when words are poorly chosen or insensitive used.

As a child, my parents by their example and correction guided my speech. I understood that I was not to call people bad names, that I was to address people using their proper names, not nicknames, that I was not to tell lies about people, and that I was not to refer to the ethnic or racial background of people in a negative way. "Fitting words," I learned, were words that communicated honor and respect.

Now, as an adult, I am still learning how to choose the most fitting words. I find that I need some good advice and need help in examining the attitudes and assumptions that lie beneath my choice of words. I need help understanding the effect my words have on others.

The church is very interested in communicating the Word with "fitting words" and has been a source of help and encouragement. To that end the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America published the "Guidelines for Avoiding Bias" in 1976. The example given in the guidelines helped me become aware of the way language constantly changes and of the ways bias seep into and through our speech.

Over the past 10 months I have been part of an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America staff group called together by the Commission for Communication and

of the Secretary. It is
group's assignment to
op a set of "Guide-
for Inclusive Use of
English Language."
The guidelines are
nt to help speakers
writers avoid bias,
epresentation, of-
and misunderstand-
n the materials they
are for the church.

These guidelines offer new applications of the lessons
parents taught me. What the guidelines point out is
it isn't enough not to call people bad names. The
words we choose to speak to someone, or about someone,
have the same effect as using a bad name. For in-
stance, if we say that people without college degrees are
"uneducated," or that those who cannot read are "igno-
rant" then our words will leave the same impression as
calling such people "stupid." Likewise, if our words are
necessarily technical or abstract, we may make our
listeners feel stupid. What some people don't hear in the
use "justification by faith," they may know and rec-
ognize in the words, "we do not have to prove ourselves
to receive God's love." Visitors to worship may have less
difficulty locating "the parish hall" than "the vestry."
Labels like "lazy," "irresponsible" or "bums"—if used
when referring to impoverished, unemployed or homeless
people—communicate an underlying assumption that
people themselves somehow are to blame for their
situation, or that they deserve misfortune.

Speaking personal characteristics before titles, (for ex-
ample, the *woman* pastor, the *Black* board member, the
speaker, the *disabled* programmer, the *young* staff
member, the *male* nurse) can, in some instances, suggest
that the combination is so unusual that one might sus-
pect or be hesitant about, the abilities of the people re-
ferred to. Our attitudes are conveyed—or betrayed—not
only by the labels we use, but also by our more subtle
use of language.

It isn't enough just to avoid nicknames. Acknowledging
people's full names and histories is important. Shorthand
abbreviations can have the effect of limiting an appreciation
of people, their gifts, heritage and histories. For example,
nicknames and references to "old people," offer no acknowledgement
of the individuality of older people and the variety
of styles, attitudes and accomplishments represented
in the population.

Now, as an adult, I
am still learning how
to choose the most
fitting words....I need
help understanding
the effect my words
have on others.

Likewise, the tendency to use only very general terms such as "Asians," "Africans" or "Native Americans" in reference to racial or ethnic heritage, can obscure the identity and diversity of the boundaries, names, language histories, and cultures of these nations and tribes.

It isn't enough not to tell lies. If we perpetrate stereotypes and myths with the language and examples we use, it is the same as telling a lie. It's just not true that:

- all men can't cook;
- all mother-in-laws are nasty;
- being married is better than being single (as implied in "pairs and spares," "spinster," "old maid");
- every Asian person is an immigrant or recent convert to Christianity;
- only ordained or professional church workers have "ministry";
- all senior citizens are in nursing homes;
- all families look and behave the same;
- only women who earn a paycheck "work";
- rural people are unsophisticated.

It isn't enough not to make negative references to another person's racial, ethnic or cultural background. It is important to know something about an individual's background and to value what is meaningful speech in that context. Cultural sensitivity often leads to language sensitivity and compels us to use more appropriate words. The term "squaw," for instance, is highly insulting to Native American women. "Fleshtone" is not a clear reference to color.

Being aware of the meaning of words in particular contexts may require a search for new words, or new sto-

I t isn't enough not to make negative references to another person's racial, ethnic or cultural background. It's important to know something about an individual's background and to value what is meaningful speech in that context.

to convey a meaning. For instance, "The Zuni people of Lake Mohave in Arizona thought Jesus was a thief when [they heard him say that] he said, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock,' because they thought that thieves knock to be sure that no one is home. An honest person knocks on the name of the person inside."¹

Where cultural meanings and language differences exist, difficulties for com-

ion, it is also true
cultural sensitivi-
open new possibili-
or expressing and
eciating the world,
ry and God's pres-
and activity.
n, for example,
r Steve Charleston
duced LWT read-
o Native American
erstandings of time

The guidelines being developed will look at the many ways our language reflects and supports bias and prejudice in the forms of racism, ageism, classism, sexism and other "isms."

1989), we were introduced to new concepts to ex-
in our own faith journeys.

out this month (August 1989), the "ELCA Guide-
for Inclusive Use of the English Language" should
equip us as we search for fitting words. What a trea-
we find when we choose and hear the most fitting
s.

the wisdom writer encourages us to seek guidance
these words: "Like a gold ring or an ornament of
is a wise repressor to a listening ear" (Proverbs
). ■

Sanneh in a paper, "Familiarity Breeds Faith; Ethical Im-
plications of Vernacular Translation," quoted in *Eculink* a news-
of the National Council of Churches of Christ, March 1987.

*Solvang is Coordinator for Education and Training
ELCA's Commission for Women. She serves on the
group preparing the ELCA Guidelines for Inclusive
of the English Language.*

Ordering Information

The "ELCA Guidelines for Inclusive Use of the English Lan-
guage" (code 69-4515) are designed for use by writers and
speakers within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Copies will be part of the September 1989 ELCA Action
Packet. Single copies will be available free after August 1 from
the ELCA Resource Information Service; call 1-800-638-3522.
Multiple copies will be available for a small fee from the ELCA
Distribution Service; call 1-800-328-4648 (in Minnesota,
1-800-752-8153).



The COLOR of FLEXIBILITY: A Retrospective

Barbara Jurgensen

Every fall three or four students from the nearby seminary were assigned to help with our Sunday services at Hope Church. One student, Sarah, came full of ideas. "Worship needs to be more festive," she insisted. "We need lively music, bright colors, celebration." Sarah wanted us to start using the new *Lutheran Book of Worship*, also known as "the green hymnal."

I recalled meeting parishioner Jim Peterson. His first question was, "You aren't going to make us get that new hymnal, are you? Because if you are, I'm leaving. I've got a brother who was in a church where it was

forced on them, and he says it's arible book."

"No," I assured him, "I'm not go to make you do any such thing."

But Sarah did have a point. The old hymnal had little emphasis celebrating that our Lord has for en us and calls us to be God's jo people.

The next time the students a got together Sarah had a propo "Why don't we have the organis der enough new hymnals just himself and us. Then every Su we could sing something from it

"People wouldn't give it a cha Rick put in. "As soon as they sav

cover they'd say they didn't

ll," Sarah suggested, "we could the books with brown paper." organist ordered the hymnals we began practicing the first in the second setting of the lit- "This Is the Feast of Victory for od."

following Sunday during the e, the four students, the wife of and I stood at the front of the ary holding books wrapped own paper and sang.

congregation loved it. After service Alice Peterson asked, "Was that wonderful song you his morning?"

called 'This is the Feast.'

ll, we enjoyed it. Sing it again." nd we did—every Sunday for the next five weeks. People told us how much they liked it, and I would hear them humming it after worship the Gladstone Grill days later. n we moved on to "Let the ards Be Fruitful, Lord." The was full of joy and the people imed it delightful.

also did "Lamb of God," "Holy, Holy Lord," "Alleluia, Lord, to Shall We Go?" and "Return to rd, Your God."

ore we knew it, it was the end school year and time for the ary students to leave. We real- ourselves into our concluding Thank the Lord and Sing His

it was time to let the church l in on what we'd been up to. June meeting I asked, "How you liked the music the stu- and I've been singing this

've loved it," Martha Doakes d. "That's some of the most ful music we've ever heard."

"Well, then," I asked, "would you like to know what that music is?"

They looked a little bewildered. "What do you mean," Alice asked, "what that music is?"

I reached under the table and pulled out a book in a brown paper wrapper. I removed the covering and held up the green hymnal.

"What!" Jim said. "I don't believe it! My brother left his church because of that book."

"Let me see that," Alice said, and she and the others examined "that book."

After some talk it was decided to postpone further discussion on the green hymnal until the next council meeting in August.

Word spread quickly among the congregation. People asked, "Were those songs really from the green hymnal?"

At that next meeting the council decided to bring the matter up at the annual meeting in January, giving people more time to think about it.

At the annual meeting, Jim stood up and said, "I've seen congregations torn apart by this, and I don't want that to happen here."

Well," Martha said, "we're going to have to get new hymnals before long. We've been re- pairing the old ones, but they're not going to last much longer."

"It seems foolish to get more red ones," Betta put in.

"I don't care," Jim said. "I'm not going to do anything that might tear the church apart, so I'm going to vote no." Alice gave him a jab in the ribs.

"We could set up the worship ser- vice so that no one would have to use the green hymnal," I suggested. "We could print parts of the service from the green hymnal and glue them inside the cover of the red hymnals."

"What about the hymns?" someone asked.

"We could pick some that are in both."

When the vote was taken it was 68 in favor, 7 opposed. The new green hymnals were ordered and took their place in the racks next to the red ones.

We found the new service joyous. The young people especially liked it better, but a number of people in their 70s and 80s told me, quietly, that they liked it better, too.

No one, however, had to use the green books. Jim could continue to use the red book—and he did, defiantly but good-naturedly. Throughout that winter and into the summer we officially had two books of worship.

Then one October Sunday Jim and Alice arrived early and Jim drew me aside. "We were at my sister's church

last Sunday. During communion they sang this great song from the green hymnal, 'Let Us Break Bread Together on Our Knees,' and I was wishing we could sing it here. . . .

Then Jim added, "So I got to thinking that maybe it's time to put the red hymnbooks away."

Three months later Jim stood at the annual meeting and moved that we consign the red hymnals to some racks he would build in the basement. The motion passed easily.

It had taken us two and a half years from the time Sarah started singing out of the covered books until the congregation was ready to sing to the new hymnals wholeheartedly, but no one had left the congregation and most people seemed very pleased. The congregation experienced a new sense of celebration in singing "Sing to the Lord a new song" (Ps. 98:1). ■



Psalm of Praise

 e the Lord!
 e the Lord,
 all growing things:
 square-cut hedge
 with reddening leaves,
 knotted walnut,
 caramel pines,
 friendly firs with
 bluegreen sheen,
 elia bush and
 oak and elm.
 ucca spears and
 prickled palms
 laugh and dance with
 wind, sing psalms:
 anna! Praise the Lord!"

 e the Lord,
 you flowering vines,
 nias and geraniums,
 lover clusters, dandelions,
 fuzzy leaves and
 fruited stems,
 elvet petals, cacti, ferns,
 burst blossoms,
 apple trees.
 n was not robed as these
 auty. Praise the Lord!

 e the Lord,
 you compost pile
 oken leaves and
 dried cut grass.
 brittle twigs will in a while
 n to earth as
 dust and ash.
 praise God, too,
 for centuries
 ock and fire,
 for purple flint,
 nestone, shale,
 conglomerate,



Strength constant.
Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord
 with symphonies
Of bird song: sparrow,
 jay and owl,
Redbreast, pigeon,
 finch, starling,
Raven, pelican, and gull.
Praise with kaleidoscopic flight
The One who hears your
 matins-hymns
And grants you peace at
 each compline.
With music, praise the Lord!

And praise the Lord for
 minute things:
For silken threads of
 spiderwebs,
Sparkling snail trails,
 monarch's wings,
For new moss and
 baptismal dew,
Cricket concerts,
 grains of sand,
Blades of grass
 and marching ants—
Creator God with gentle hands
Holds all these: Praise the Lord!

Let all things praise the Lord!

*Karen McClandon
Modesto, California*

How Manifold Are Thy Works!

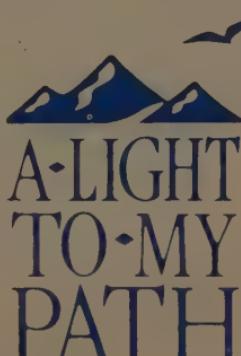
Study Text: Psalm 104
Frederick and Leola Gaiser

"I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers. He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil. All this he does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true."¹

The catechism may be many things to us—a dated document of difficult language, a painful adult memory of painful childhood memorization, a piece of tradition to which we give little thought, or a gift of words to shape and reflect truth and experience.

¹From the 1979 edition of *The Small Catechism in Contemporary English with Lutheran Book of Worship Texts*, copyright 1960, 1968.

Perhaps the above explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed can function in the last words of the text. Here, Martin Luther reminds us that God was not only active in the past, but continues to be at work in the present; God is involved not only in "religious" things, but in every aspect of life; God not only cares about the world as a whole, God cares about each of us individually. Luther's teaching echoes the language of Psalm 104 so well that phrases from the catechism will serve to outline this month's study. Psalm 104 invites us to join the grass and trees, the birds and the badgers, and the sun and moon in their unending praise of the Creator.



Hearing the Psalm
Creation themes abound in the Psalter. God is the Creator of the earth and of human beings. The earth and all its inhabitants are related to another in their common dependence upon God.

Thinking about creation made the writers sing. Creation psalms hymns of praise, and Psalm 104 exception. As stated in verse 31, God rejoices in creation! So, as we recite Psalm 104, it is not only rams and wild goats that join us. We want to listen for the voice of

With what words does the
begin and end? What do you
k is the significance of this
e?

Psalm 103 begins with the same words, which may be why these two psalms are put together in the Psalter. Read Psalm 103. What is its theme? How does putting together the themes of Psalms 103 and 104 help us know and praise God?

3 Find several verses in Psalm 104 that are written in the past tense. Find other verses in the present tense. How does this mixture help us understand God's work in creation?

4 Who is the subject of most of the sentences in the psalm? Why are other sentences different (for example, verses 11-12, 17, 19b, 22-23)? Are there some processes of creation in which God is not involved? Do you think the psalmist believes that every involvement of God in the world will appear "miraculous"?

All That Exists

Reread Psalm 104:1-9.

According to the world view of the ancient Near East, shared by this psalm, the earth is a flat surface, resting on solid foundations set in the cosmic sea. The heavens (stars,

planets, sun, moon) are set in a kind of canopy over the earth (the firmament). Beneath the earth and above the firmament are waters—a frequent symbol for chaos, the destructive enemy of creation.

1 Recall the first sentence in the Bible (Genesis 1:1). How does that verse summarize the first nine verses of Psalm 104?

2 Psalm 104 talks about the structures of the heaven and earth quite differently than we normally do today. In many ways, the language of the psalm is also different than that of Genesis 1. In what other ways do we speak of creation? How do you picture "heaven and earth"?

3 W. Chalmers Smith's hymn, "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" (LBW 526), closes with these words: "Oh, help us to see 'Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!" Compare this with verse 2 of the

psalm. What do you make of this age of light and hiding?

4 What do you think verse 6 might mean when it speaks of water, fire, and flame being messengers of ministers of God? How do you picture God's presence?

5 According to verses 6-9, what happened to the dangerous water of chaos? Are these never again to be a threat? (See Psalm 69:1-3.) Psalm 104 is a psalm of praise, while Psalm 69 is a lament. Does that help explain the different images of water in the two psalms? How? How does water still function for us in these ways?

Provides

ad Psalm 104:10-18.

How does the theme of water tie the verses together? What is the water here? Whose side is water on

Thinking about this psalm, why do you think water works so well as a sign of Baptism?

The psalm counts food, wine, oil, bread among the gifts of God. These things can also bring serious problems (see Proverbs 20:1; 7). What do you think is the reason for this paradox?

4 Read Psalm 148:5-6. How do these verses relate to Psalm 104:17-18? (See also verse 19.) What does Psalm 148 mean by saying that sun and moon, trees and mountains, snow and cattle praise the Lord? Have you ever heard them doing this?

My Sabbath

Emily Dickinson (1864)

Some keep the Sabbath going to church.

*I keep it staying at home,
With a bobolink for a chorister,
And an orchard for a dome.*

*Some keep the Sabbath in
surplice*

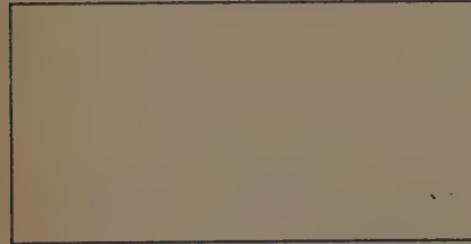
*I just wear my wings,
And instead of tolling the bell for
church,
Our little sexton sings.*

*God preaches—a noted
clergyman,
And the sermon is never long;
So instead of going to heaven at
last,
I'm going all along.*

5 Like the psalmist, Emily Dickinson rejoices in God's presence in creation. What similarities can you find between the psalm and the poem?



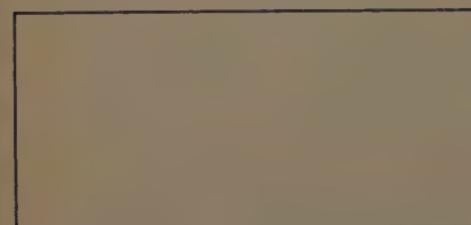
6 Dickinson seems to suggest that God is more easily worshiped in nature than in church. Others have agreed with her. What reason does she give for this opinion? Would the psalmist agree? Why or why not? How do you feel about what Emily Dickinson says? How do you experience God in church? In creation?



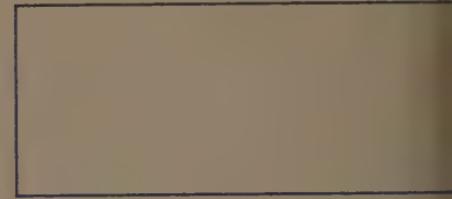
God Protects Me in Time of Danger

Reread Psalm 104:19-26.

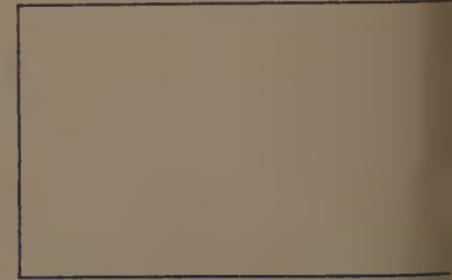
1 In many cultures around Israel, the sun and the moon were regarded as gods. Why might this have been true? What does our psalm say about this?



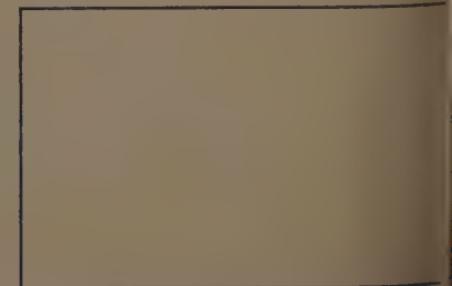
2 In their mythology, the Canaanites, who lived in Palestine before Israel, thought of the sea as a powerful and destructive divine force, an element opposing creation and order. How is the sea described here?



3 Leviathan (verse 26), the great sea monster, was the chaos dragon in ancient mythology—the terrifying symbol of everything opposed to life. Leviathan was not at all funny (see Job 41:5), yet how does the psalmist deflate Leviathan's ego?



4 What do our answers to the preceding three questions tell us about this psalm's view of God? Why is it good news that God is the only divine force in the world? How does this help us deal with present questions about the occult, or the world of "spirits"?



...s of Psalm 104 are remarkably similar to a hymn by Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaton (Ahh-uh-NOT-en), who lived in the 14th century B.C. The hymn praises the disk of the sun (Ra), whom Akhenaton proclaimed to be the sole god. That man said:

*laybreak, when thou arisest
on the horizon,
n thou shonest as the Aton
by day,
u drivest away the darkness
and givest thy rays . . .
he world, they do their work.
All beasts are content with
their pasturage;
s and plants are flourishing.
The birds which fly from
their nest,
r wings are (stretched out)
in praise to [you] . . .
i makest the season in order
to rear all that thou hast
made,
winter to cool them,
the heat that they may taste
thee.”*

the sun is God in the poem,
Egyptian hymn also says:

*n thou settest in the
western horizon,
and is in darkness, in the
manner of death . . .
eir goods . . . might be
stolen . . .
lion is come forth from
this den;
eeping things, they sting.
ness is a shroud, and the
earth is in stillness,
e who made them rests in
his horizon."*

5 Is this song like Psalm 104? Explain your answer. Some say that Psalm 104 might have referred directly to the Egyptian hymn; others think that both may have used common ancient language independently of each other. What does Psalm 104 say to ancient peoples about how God works? What does it say to us?

6 The Egyptian hymn differs strongly from Psalm 104 in what it says about darkness. How would you explain the differences? Why do you think the difference is important? Darkness is still seen as a dangerous time. What would you say to Akhenaten's claim that the danger comes because god (the sun) is absent at night?

7 According to John 1:3, everything was made by God through the Word—Jesus Christ. Christ is the light that shines in the darkness. How does that truth help us understand the dilemma in the previous question?

**God Preserves
My Body and Soul**
Reread Psalm 104:27-30.

1 Verse 27 is similar to Psalm 145:15-16, which is frequently used as a table prayer. In the setting of this psalm, how do you think God provides every creature with food?

2 The Hebrew words for “breath” in verse 29 and “Spirit” in verse 30 are the same: ruach (pronounced ROO-ahk). What is the relationship among life and breath and Spirit? (See Genesis 2:7.)

**Thank and Praise,
Serve and Obey**
Reread Psalm 104:31-35.

1 Describe the tone and message of these verses. How are these verses an appropriate conclusion to this psalm?

2 Some people speak of God as part of creation or contained in creation. What do verses 31-32 say about that?

3 Sometimes people say that we are god or that we are divine. This is particularly true in parts of the “New Age” religious thought. Why might this kind of talk be attractive to some? What does Psalm 104 say about this idea? What makes the psalm’s answer attractive?

According to verse 31, God resides in his own creation. If that is so, might God also weep? When?

Verse 35 seems an unhappy way to close this beautiful psalm. It is important, though, that this not be seen as personal vengeance. Understood as a plea for God's creation to help God to conquer chaos completely, what does this verse add?

Closing
The psalmist prays that this meditation on creation might be pleasing to God (Psalm 104:34). We join in prayer—not only for this session, but for our whole study of the book of Psalms. The psalmists have indeed a light to our path through the seasons of the year and through the variety of human conditions. We rejoice in that light, and we give thanks that it leads us finally to the light of the world, Jesus Christ. All creation—including each one of us—is renewed and restored in Jesus. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

Worship

Pray together the Psalm prayer written to accompany Psalm 104 (LBW Minister's Desk Edition, p. 410):

God of all light, life, and love, through the visible things of this world you raise our thoughts to things unseen, and you show us your power and your love. From your dwelling-place refresh our hearts and renew the face of the earth with the life-giving water of your Word, until the new heaven and new earth resound with the song of resurrection in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Looking Ahead

In the September issue, we begin our study of the Gospel of John. The theme "A Light to My Path" will continue with a look at the themes of light and dark in John's gospel. The study, written by Nancy and Craig Koester, will run through the December 1989 issue of *Lutheran Woman Today*. ■

Resources to Supplement Gospel of John Bible Study

Leader guide: 2-8923; \$2.50
Resource book: 2-8924; \$1.95
Check your 1989-90 Women of the ELCA catalog or contact your nearest Augsburg Fortress location for order information. Transportation and handling charges will be added.

Audiotape edition of the Bible study resource book produced by the ELCA Braille and Tape Service for persons with visual or other physical disabilities is available for \$4.00 (includes postage and handling). Orders may be directed to:

Augsburg Fortress Audiovisual Dept.,
426 S. Fifth St., Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440. Checks should be made payable to Augsburg Fortress.

Copyright © 1989 Augsburg Fortress. May not be reproduced without permission.

PAUL BURTNES, MARY JOHNSON, AND KEITH SEHNERT

Walking: Keeping Astride of Health

You are only a few steps away from improving the quality of your life and quite possibly its quantity.

Walking, the most natural activity in the world, has also become one of the hottest fitness activities in recent years. Nearly 60 million North Americans now recognize the potential fitness benefits of walking.

Walking is one fitness activity that is virtually injury-free. One foot is always on the ground and that provides support for hardworking tendons, ligaments and joints.

Once you begin a walking program you'll discover some of its unique pleasures. *Walking can provide a pleasant sensory experience and an opportunity to view God's wonderful creation.* Beautiful colors, interesting landscapes or architectural detail can delight the eye. Plan your route so that it will include rewarding sights that draw you on.

A good brisk walk can lift your spirits. Walking helps the body to stimulate the release of a natural

mood-elevating chemical called endorphin. One researcher has said, "Exercise is the world's best antidepressant."

Walking is also social. You can walk with a friend, your spouse, your older children, your neighbor, members of your circle. It's good community.

Even a busy schedule can include a walking fitness program. You can squeeze in a workout on your way to or from work by parking your car a few blocks away from your usual space. If you take the bus or subway, get off a stop or two before your destination and walk the rest of the way. Take a walk during your lunch break. A quick walk can make you feel more energetic, less tense.

Walking is a valuable weight-loss tool. It builds lean muscle tissue while it melts away fat. Firm muscles helps you to look better, feel better. The weight gain that often accompanies aging could probably be prevented through a walking fitness program.

Stamina, muscle tone and bone density can all be improved through a walking fitness program. A brisk walk uses almost all of the body's

WALKING CAN: LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE, CONTROL WEIGHT, STRENGTHEN BONES, STRENGTHEN MUSCLES, STRENGTHEN HEART, STRENGTHEN LIVER, STRENGTHEN LUNGS, STRENGTHEN BOWELS, STRENGTHEN KIDNEYS, STRENGTHEN BONES, STRENGTHEN MUSCLES, STRENGTHEN HEART, STRENGTHEN LUNGS, STRENGTHEN BOWELS, STRENGTHEN KIDNEYS



and major muscles.

urrent studies show that every step you take is a step toward a longer life, because walking can lower blood pressure, control weight gain, lower cholesterol levels and reduce stress. Simply put, walking is a healthy lifetime activity for almost anyone. Sounds like a good way to promote healing and wholeness—one of the purposes of Women of the WAA!

One of the safest forms of exercise, walking can be done almost anywhere, at any time, and at any age.

No special equipment is required, but do try to wear a pair of flexible shoes that provide your toes with the extra room needed during the motion of the walking. The shoes should also provide plenty of support around the heel. If you have special problems with your feet, go to a shoe store where a professional shoe fitter can help you. Whenever buying shoes for walking, don't forget to take along thick socks to wear while trying the shoes on.

Warm up before you walk. Five minutes of gentle stretching exercises will increase your flexibility and help prepare your body for the exercise activity. Warming up gets your joints, muscles, and cardiovascular system ready for action. You should do these same stretching exercises after you walk. This cool-down period allows your body to return to its preexercise level and keeps your muscles flexible.

If you are just starting a walking fitness program, begin with a 15-minute walk three times a week. Choose a pace that is appropriate for your fitness level. Your aim should be to move your heart rate up to your "target range." Your target range can be found by subtracting your age from 220, then taking 60-80 percent of that figure.

POWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS, AND REDUCE STRESS.

As you walk, stride with your legs as far forward as possible, and swing your arms. To get a better upper-body workout, walk briskly with your arms pumping.

Here are some tips to help you get up and walking:

Set Some Goals.

Try to decide on a goal for your walking. Is it to feel better, help your heart, lose weight? Your enthusiasm will be greater and you'll be more pleased with the results if you set a goal or goals. Then chart your progress.

Add Variety to Your Routine.

You can vary the time of day or the routes that you walk. If the weather outside is too harsh, you can head for the nearest shopping mall and do your walking there.

Plan a Walking Vacation.

Many major cities in the United States or Canada have put together walking tours. These are most frequently found in historic or resort areas.

Join a Walking Club.

Membership usually includes a newsletter subscription which comes with many helpful hints. A dose of healthy competition and camaraderie usually is found in these clubs.

Most importantly, just do it. Walking is an easy way to care for God's special creation—our physical bodies. Its benefits are ample. And best of all, you are only a few steps away from being fit! ■



As it is, God has set each member of the body in the place he wanted him to be. If all the members were alike, where would the body be? . . . The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' any more than the head can say to the feet, 'I do not need you.' Even those members of the body which seem less important are in fact indispensable"

(1 Corinthians 12:18-19, 21, New American Bible)

As Christian people, we are members of the body of Christ. How many times have you heard that? Has it ever meant anything to you? Have you ever tried to figure out what part of the body of Christ you are?

Are you a foot? One might consider the foot at the very bottom of it, carrying all the weight, totally appreciated, often abused and far away from "where the action is." However, the foot is also a complex part of the body (28 bones, 32 joints) essential to the body's physics of balance, acceleration and centripetal force.

Watch a basketball player! ▀

A Solid Footing

Trudy Y. Smith



change direction. Watch a ballet dancer on perfect pointe. Watch a leg as it studies its toes. To be "a part in the body of Christ is a noble thing.

Maybe you'd rather be an eye. The eye comes in colors, opens and closes, sees and dilates, and sends the wonders of God's creation in glorious technicolor to the brain. It's right up there where everything is going on. Important. Recognized. A great part of the body, the eye.

Or you a foot, an eye, or something else? What about the other people who go to your church? What about the ones who usher on Sunday? What about the members of the church? The organist? The person who always comes into church late and sits in the back? Where does the pastor fit into your body of Christ? If you be any part of the body what would you like to be?

Hold it! Wait a minute! Go back to the beginning: "As it is, God has set each member of the body in the place he wanted it to be. It never made sense before, let alone something now. You foot, you index, you fingernail, you corpuscles—Even those members of the body that seem less important are in fact indispensable." There is *no* part of the body of Christ which is less important than another. And that's the

way God wants it to be.

The one part of the body that has been spoken for is the head. The head of the church is Jesus Christ. All other parts are on an equal "footing."

See! There we are back to that remarkable foot again: The foundation of the body of Christ, that which gives it mobility and at the same time stability. Praise the foot, not the lowly foot, but the exalted foot. Praise the liver, the pancreas, the tibia and fibula. Praise the glorious arrangement that God has seen fit to put us in and praise the part you play in it. None more exalted nor more lowly than another. All miraculous and beloved parts of one and the same body. You are the part God wants you to be. And you are indispensable. ■

Trudy Smith has served on both the board and the staff of Crossings, an organization based in St. Louis, Missouri. Crossings helps people see and practice the interconnections (or "crossings") between faith and daily life, and the world and Word.



FOREMOTHERS OF FAITH

Nancy Smith Palladeau

Janet Hunt



A friend in my congregation said, "Whenever I bake bread I picture my grandmother kneading and shaping the loaves . . . and then my own turn out perfectly."

My friend's comment is more than a baking tip; it speaks of the value of knowing those who have gone before us—and of how we are made better and stronger by our acquaintance with such foremothers of faith.

Nancy Smith Palladeau, an Oneida Indian woman, was for many years a baker of bread and later a "matron" at Bethany Indian Mission at Wittenberg, Wisconsin. She first came to the mission as a ten-year-old student in 1888.

Born on December 1, 1878, Nancy Smith was the fourth of seven chil-

*Nancy Smith Palladeau
gave her life to the
church—by baking bread
and caring for children.*

dren. She lived with her family in a log house in the wilderness near Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The Lutheran Mission at Wittenberg had been established to educate and minister to children in need. The mission school provided

training in what was then called "domestic and industrial arts."

Nancy was confirmed into the Lutheran faith at Bethany Mission in 1892. Completing her education through the eighth grade, she took the position of assistant baker at the Mission in 1896. In 1902 she married William Palladeau, who had received training as a carpenter and painter at the mission.

In 1905 the United States government bought the Mission property and converted it into a govern-

ol. Nancy was hired as matron
the small children there and Wil-
became a vocational instructor
rpentry.

The Palladeaus' two children, Fer-
and and Harriet, were born in
and 1915. The children went to
with Nancy at the Mission, and
grew up under her care along
all the others. During these
s Nancy also became active in
ladies Aid and the Mission Cir-
her local congregation.

hen the government sold the
l back to the Lutheran church
ittenberg in 1916, the Pallad-
s were transferred to a govern-
school in Bismarck, North Da-
and later to Fort Totten at
s Lake, North Dakota. Nancy
ed as a baker in the schools in
Dakota until she became ill
underwent surgery for gall-
s. She never really regained her
h, and from that time on she
ed as a matron at Fort Totten,
tion considered to be less stren-

1921 the Palladeaus were
to return to work at Bethany
n Mission, with Nancy as girls'
on and William as fireman and
lian.

ough Nancy's primary respon-
ies involved meeting the phys-
eds of the children—both as a
and a matron—she under-
that in her role as "substitute
er" she had a responsibility for
spiritual needs as well. It was
abit to gather the children to-
for prayers every evening.

932 an epidemic of scarlet fe-
oke out in the school. Over 60
vere enrolled at the time, and
ll contracted the disease. Up to
ls were sick at one time. The
nsibility for nursing them fell to
and to her daughter-in-law,

Ella. Just as the girls were returning
to health, Nancy's husband and both
her children became ill with influ-
enza.

Exhausted, Nancy contracted
pneumonia. She died on March 3,
1932.

Nancy Smith Palladeau, a fore-
mother in faith, was nurtured by the
church and gave her life back to it
willingly. She did so not by traveling
to distant places, or by cultivating
skills atypical of her time, culture,
and gender. Rather she gave her life
to the church in the same institution
where she was nurtured—in life and
in faith. And she did so by baking
bread and caring for children.

Today we may or may not choose
to emulate her choices in terms of
actual tasks of ministry. We might be
wise not to emulate her patterns of
work which led her to place the needs
of others so far above her own that
she sacrificed her health and life.

Yet Nancy can be for us an ex-
ample of strength and faithfulness.
Somehow we are made stronger
when we close our eyes and picture
her shaping loaves of bread. When
we remember this foremother of
faith, we remember that women
have always been in ministry, using
their gifts to further the work of the
gospel. ■

*The Rev. Janet Hunt, a regular con-
tributor to LWT, serves parishes in
Dixon and Nachusa, Illinois.*



A Caring Country

William A. Dudde

Last fall presidential candidate George Bush voiced his hope that America might become "a kinder, gentler nation." Many

Americans were encouraged to hear such a sentiment from a leading politician.

As Christians, many of us ought to have a pretty good idea of what it means to be compassionate. After all, the God in whose image we are made is the personification of kindness and mercy.

And the biblical writers frequently call upon us as God's children to emulate our Maker in this compassion. Women especially, who are so often nurturers and caretakers in our society, know a great deal about compassion.

But what does it mean when people are exhorted to be "kinder and gentler" not by a preacher but by a political candidate?

God wants our Christian beliefs to permeate the whole of our lives, including our political lives. What's more, if we are honest, we know that Christians have no monopoly on compassion.



Christians can and should j hands with all those who seek to treat people with compassion.

Interestingly, some of the most explicit pronouncements in support of a more compassionate and human society have come from the United Nations, a global political body whose constituents represent the widest possible range of religious beliefs. It is unfortunate that these manitarian pronouncements and programs of the UN receive much less attention from the media and public leaders than do the political actions of that body.

For example, national governments have seldom spoken out comprehensively and clearly about the basic rights of their own citizens as has the United Nations in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹

It should not be assumed that our own country is too civilized to accept this kind of social guidance from

national source, for the United States avoided signing many of the conventions and covenants that is from the Declaration.

We might doubt that the American people will become kinder, gentler simply because their president urges them to do so. In fact, some people argue that Mr. Bush's plea is a little way of escaping government responsibility for caring for the victims of our nation's social shortcomings—the poor, the needy and the marginalized. If that is true, his call is likely to fail. Why?

Hundreds of thousands—perhaps millions?—of Americans are already showing they care greatly about fellow human beings who are disadvantaged and hurting. Through their churches and other volunteer organizations in their communities they give generously of money, free time and energy—in that sense don't need a national leader to urge them to do so. For those other hundreds of thousands—perhaps millions?—lives are more centered on self than others, is it possible that a national leader will motivate them to be compassionate when the world's spiritual and moral leaders have not succeeded in doing so? Whatever we consider the motivation for the president's plea for a gentler nation, there is am-

ple reason for the church people of America to give it a respectful, serious and positive response. We should not only endorse such an idea but also make known to him and others in Washington how we think it can be realized in genuinely practical ways.

Our elected national leaders can lead the way to a more compassionate America, through the policies they pursue and the budgets they support. The people of America will simply not be moved to greater kindness and gentleness *unless they see those same qualities reflected in the actions, and use of national resources, by the White House and Congress.* Tones for such a compassionate melody start at the top. National leadership can expect people to behave compassionately when it reflects that very same compassion.

In the end, there is no simple mechanism for infusing kindness and gentleness into public policy. It's something we *all* need to work at and wrestle with—and we will not always agree in our conclusions. But the process begins in discussion.

Study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the context of Scripture, order the booklet Life in Its Fullness. Send a self-addressed 5 x 7 inch envelope, affixed 75 cents postage to:

*Fullness Booklet
Lutheran Woman Today
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631*





Let us look, for instance, at our foreign policy. If we were a kinder, gentler nation, how would we show care for other countries—especially for the more vulnerable nations of the developing world? How does a caring country act? Here are some possibilities I see, based on my experience. As you read my descriptions, think of your own images of how a caring country would deal with other nations.

- A caring country tries to understand and meet the needs and aspirations of people—common, ordinary people—in other countries, instead of underscoring their differing governments, political systems and ideologies.
- A caring country respects and tries to understand legitimate national interests of other countries. A caring country doesn't rely on military, economic or political muscle to influence other countries, unless the goal is equitable treatment for people.
- A caring country makes a strong and genuine effort to build world peace. It deploys few troops on foreign soil, and doesn't promote arms sales to countries that can't afford them in the first place. It would heed the fervent pleas of the many millions—Europeans, Japanese, Central Americans, people in the Soviet Union, Americans and others—who are frightened by the constant talk of preparedness for war. It works on nonmilitary solutions to international tensions.

■ It uses foreign aid funds and food reserves to support effective ways to conquer hunger and poverty in the world. It strikes a rational balance between expenditures for military ends and for peaceful development.

never, ever, withholds food, or other relief materials, as a political weapon—as the United States did last year when the people of Nicaragua suffered a hurricane disaster of massive proportions. Instead, a caring country gives aid and assistance in trying times, as the U.S. and other countries did during and after the 1972 menian earthquake.

■ A caring country does not undermine governments it doesn't like in small countries by imposing economic and trade boycotts that keep people from getting medical supplies and other basic necessities, as has been witnessed in regard to Central America these many years.

■ A caring country tends to discourage the kinds of food imports from developing countries (out-of-season or exotic fruits, for example) that make it harder for the people of those countries to feed themselves on basic foodstuffs.

■ A caring country helps debt-ridden nations get out from under their debts without further impoverishing their people.

■ A caring country ever more firmly opposes those governments and movements that disregard human rights—whether they are “friends” or “adversaries.” This includes, of course, the apartheid practices of the government of South Africa.

■ A caring country pursues a genuinely humanitarian policy toward the people of Central America.

, for instance, listen to the of a wide range of Central American community leaders as to their countries need most in critical time. It would support sorely needed land reform moves in the region.

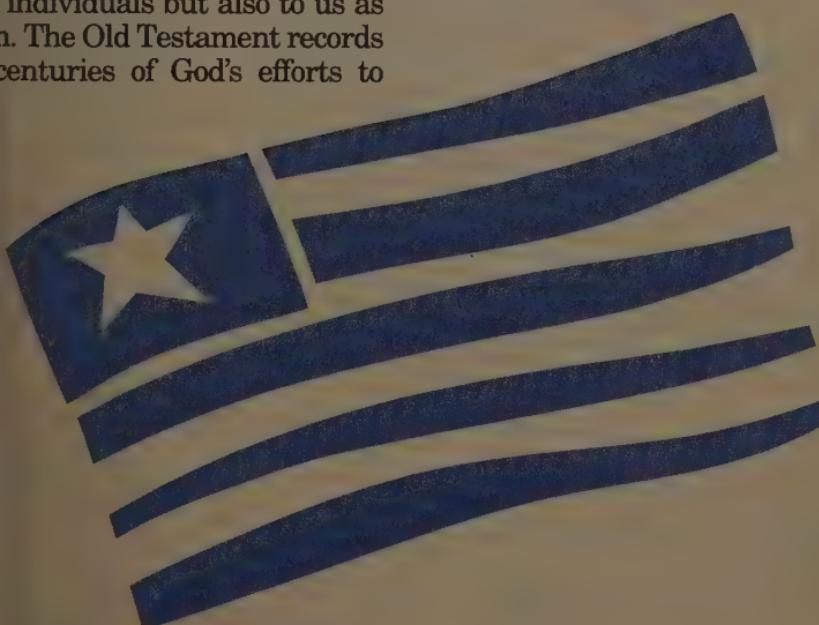
Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as well as ELCA, is focusing on Central America and Namibia as two areas of special concern. Some of you in congregations may have observed Central America Week last month. If you haven't yet seen it, you want to view "Once I Was There: A Pastoral Visit to Central America," a videotape that details Bishop Herbert Chilstrom's trip to Central America. This 20-minute tape can be borrowed from ELCA resource centers or synods, or rented for \$7.50 from the ELCA Distribution Service by calling 612-328-4648 (in Minnesota call 652-8153).

The call to greater kindness and compassion is addressed to us not as individuals but also to us as a nation. The Old Testament records centuries of God's efforts to

teach Israel what it means to be a great nation. Our 200-year-old nation is still learning, too. Perhaps in the next few years the world

may come to see us as a more caring, compassionate nation. How would you like to help that happen? You can at least begin by talking about it in your church discussion groups, then taking action that fits your understanding. ■

*William A. Dudde, former editor of the mission magazine *World Encounter*, is a retired Evangelical Lutheran Church in America minister who lives near Philadelphia, Penn. He has worked on four continents as a missionary and as an editor for *Lutheran World Federation*, and has traveled to over 60 countries.*



The Power of the Family

Susan B. Lidums

Start talking about family—your family—and the room heats up. There's an emotional energy. Warm for some. Too hot for many. Why? Because the family has power. Power to heal and create. And power to hurt and destroy.

We all live in a family of some kind—bonded by kinship, fellowship, or friendship to others who help shape and sustain us. Within family we know joy and pain, care and rejection, responsibility and rewards.

Family as part of creation is good; as part of a fallen humanity, it also is sinful. What makes families good for us is the creative and redemptive power of God at work in them. Because of this, families can know love. People can live in covenant and commitment to each other.

The hallmarks of a healthy family are 1) open and clear communication, 2) fair rules, 3) appropriate and flexible roles, 4) clear limits and boundaries, 5) commitment to each other and 6) spiritual nurture.

Families can celebrate ordinary strengths—strengths that help them live well with each other from day to day. Strengths like the ability to cope, the blessing of shared time or common interests, mutual respect, flexibility, care, lightheartedness, dependability.

The family that nurtures faith in God has much to celebrate. Within a family of faith we can learn how to care, how to speak the truth, how to

live in relationship to God and to others, and how to make God known.

The strengths in families nurture love and create futures rich in promise and hope. To create such futures we need to be open to change. Flexibility rises out of stability, the context in which change can happen.

When we feel we have nothing to stand on and don't know who we are, we hardly dare move. To change anything could mean we'll lose everything. However bad things may be, we cling to what little we have known. It is when we feel some measure of security that we dare to change.

Security comes from knowing that some things endure. Particular rules may shift as circumstances change, but values remain. Security is when we know that we belong. Passing on family stories helps us feel part of a story. Family rituals and traditions reinforce long-honored values. These things give us identity. Security is knowing that family will be there for us, no matter what.

Change happens when families are flexible. Change can be as simple as keeping family roles flexible, roles like nurturer, supporter, cheerleader, clown, scapegoat, baby, achiever, bad egg. Unchanging roles trap us and our families.

Change can be abrupt and unusual, as in change demanded by illness, loss or death. Change can be slow and deliberate, as in the growth

volved in learning a profession. Age can be surprisingly predictive as we mature and age. The best ages foster the security that encourages the flexibility, adaptability and coping skills needed to grow into adulthood.

Finally, not all families seem worth saving. Abusive families, families full of fear or despair, families caught in patterns of rigid authority or control, families without hope.

I believe that the future of family is in God. God creates and redeems within the most pained and despairing human family.

By helping the strengths of each family, seeing and celebrating even the early signs of healthy relating, we begin to lift families out of destructive patterns.

Change in light of the family's strengths is possible. In time, love can replace fear and despair.

The church can intentionally guide and support families in healthy patterns of living. Many congregations offer programs where parents, elderly youth, singles and others can know support and learn healthy patterns of relating and being in love. Together we can celebrate the richness of family.

We dare not idealize family living. Family is not the primary daily example for faithfulness and grace, but it is Jesus who saves and redeems—and it is our relationship with God that is most important. Rather than idealize family, we need to realize

family—see it for what it is, understand how it works, know its power. We can then begin to realize and live God's creative and redemptive power within family.

As members of God's family, we live in grace. We know forgiveness. We have the assurance of God's comfort and strength. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. Living in God's family gives us strength and vision to live in relationship to God and each other. ■

Susan Lidums, an associate in education and family ministries, serves a congregation in Detroit. She has written a number of family resources for the Lutheran church.



Within a family of faith we can learn how to care, how to live in relationship to God and to others.

BREAKING OUR ADDICTIONS

The Books of Anne Wilson Schaef

Linda Daniels Block

The women in our town of 1000 passed it around a brown paper bag. It seemed dangerous, subversive. It challenged what we all knew as normal—working till you dropped, giving too much time, too much

yourself, keeping yourself going with concern, not having much of a life to call your own.

Women's Reality, a book by Anne Wilson Schaef, speaks of a different way of living, of looking at life, of being with one another. This book had a dramatic effect on our lives as we read it, then passed it along in its secret brown bag. It began to change our thinking, our relationships. It helped us to affirm our experience and our own perceptions.

From the very center of my own life, I heartily recommend all of Anne Wilson Schaef's books. But they are not for the faint-hearted. Her work cuts through the center of our culture, of our society, even of our church. If you want to shake up your assumptions and your life, if you're not committed to personal health and growth, stop here.

Women's Reality was born out of observation and listening to women. Schaef, a psychotherapist, kept working at understanding and naming what she was discovering in her patients. Concurrently, her knowledge of addictions was growing and she began to see a larger and more frightening picture.

le working with those addicted to alcohol and chemicals were beginning to suggest that the addictive person's supportive spouse and significant others were "co-dependents" in the addiction process. If you have ever been in Alanon or Al-Anon, you know that "co-dependents" are people who unwittingly support the addiction of another by covering for and protecting the addict, helping the addict—and themselves—avoid treatment. Co-dependents wind up in the destructive cycle of addiction. Schaeaf began to see addictive and co-dependent behavior in more and more of her patients, including herself. She saw that overeating, smoking, overworking, overexpecting, overachieving, overvolunteering all followed the same basic pattern. She also observed that the home and the church often support these behaviors. She gives examples of addiction and co-dependence wherever she went. Schaeaf and others in her field began to connect the dots.

"A way of life, our society, she says, is all an "addictive process." We are living in a culture that pushes us over the edge, a way that is killing us. Our society promotes not a "living well," but an addictive way of dying.

Schaeaf is not immune. I could look at my growing up in an overachieving in my traditional, conforming workaholic family upbringing. At my dependency in my relationships. I could see my own "clergy burnout." It disturbed me, and it frightened me.

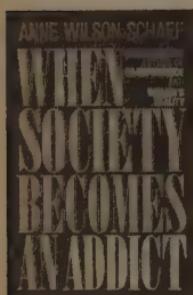
Somehow, though, the concepts espoused by Schaeaf offered a beacon of light and hope. I had been confused in my relationships, puzzled by the dynamics of a meeting, discouraged and bewildered about the oppressive events of my life. Confusion, Schaeaf said, is one of the hallmarks of an addictive system. It keeps you out of touch with yourself, denying your own feelings, experiences and perceptions. Confusion keeps you stuck where you are, feeling powerless to

begin to practice Schaeaf's suggestions. I am accepting my co-dependence, my addiction

Schaeaf says the family and even the church are primary promoters of the over syndrome, the addictive process.
We are overworking, overvolunteering, overexpecting.
We are not taking time to be faithful stewards of our own lives while we are doing what we think the church needs and God requires.

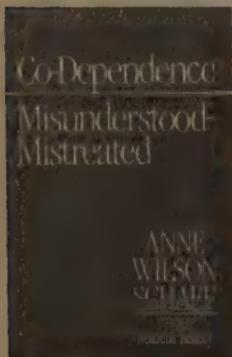
Books by Anne Wilson Schaefer

(All are published by Harper and Row and are available at your local library or bookstore.)



When Society Becomes An Addict,

1987, 152 pages, \$8.95 (paperback).



Co-Dependence: Misunderstood—Mistreated, 1986, 105 pages, \$7.95 (paperback).

tions to eating, and to work. I consciously tried to be less driven, less fearful, and more peaceful. I took time to listen to my feelings.

By the time Schaefer's new book arrived, *Escape from Intimacy: Untangling the "Love" Addictions—Sex, Romance, and Relationships*, I was looking forward to learning new and healing skills for all the relationships of my life.

Schaefer says in *Escape from Intimacy*, "As long as we are looking outside ourselves for intimacy, we will never have it and we will never be able to share it. In order to be intimate with another partner, we will have to know who we are, what is important to us, and what we want. If we do not know these things about ourselves, we will never share them with another person. And we cannot be intimate . . ." (page 123).

I have found Schaefer's work to be a tough, helpful hand of hope reaching out to guide us to a healthier life. So, too, have the other women who passed along her first book in a brown paper bag and kept reading, kept working on their lives. One is now training volunteers for a battered women's shelter. Another is participating in an adult children of alcoholics group, praying healing in her family and her church and moves toward recovery in her own "living room."

We have all faced a lot of pain. It is hard and often painful to break through denial and confusion, look at our lives and our upbringings, face our pain and quit what AA calls "stupid thinkin'." Each of us needs to recognize and admit our own addictions and co-dependencies.

Schaefer says the family—and even the church—are primary promoters of the overdrive, the addictive process. Our new church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is no exception. As we build this new church, there are many hopes and expectations. We have promised ourselves that we will have everything. We have promised a new day, a better church, renewed congregations, exciting

ns, missions by the thousands. Everywhere in the church—in churchwide, national, and synodical staff; in congregational volunteers; in pastors and associates in ministry; and in all those active in the church, you see dedication and love for God and church. But you can also feel the weight of exhaustion. Are we overworking, overvolunteering, overextending. We are not taking time to be faithful to the rhythms of our own lives while we are doing what we think the church needs and God requires. We often don't take time to know who we are, what we feel, or what is important to us. How much do we—as individuals, as dedicated Christians—and our beloved church contribute to this addictive process?

Often we think of Jesus, an excellent role model for the addictive process. I close my eyes and imagine the biblical picture of huge crowds of needy individuals pressing around him, begging for help and healing. Suddenly, Jesus stops, gets into a boat, and goes off by himself.

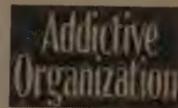
Think about the people left on the shore. He had finished. Many were still sick. Some would die before they could see him again. But he had got into the boat! He was a faithful steward of his life. In the midst of his ministry Jesus lost his perspective or sense of who he was. He is our Savior, the one who promises to walk with us in the "ways of life."

Each of us is given the responsibility for one's own life—for our gifts, talents, and service. We can face our pain, open our eyes to our dependencies and co-dependencies, and we can seek help.

There are hundreds of individuals and agencies who help. And there is the hand of God reaching out to help us stop our overstressed lives. To help us into the boat and face our pain. Then our serving will truly give more to the church and the world because it will reflect an understanding of what is "the abundant

Women's Reality

An Emerging Female System in a White Male Society, 1981, 169 pages, \$8.95 (paperback).



Anne Wilson Schaeff
with Diane Fassel

*Why We Overwork, Cover Up, Pick
Up the Pieces, Please the Boss
& Perpetuate Sick Organizations*

The Addictive Organization

written with Diane Fassel, 1988, 282 pages, \$16.95 (hardcover).

ESCAPE INTIMACY

Understanding Our Addictions to Sex, Love and Romance, Relationships

Escape from Intimacy

Untangling the "Love" Addictions—Sex, Romance, Relationships, 1989, 165 pages, \$13.95 (hardcover).

Brief Prayers on News Items

Children struggle daily with hunger

Large numbers of children in the world go to bed hungry each night. Children who should have time to play—to enjoy the wonder of viewing the world through curious eyes—grow old before their time. One grade-schooler tells of the daily hunt through garbage cans for treasure—a rotten apple or some cereal left in a box.

Loving Lord, help us to be responsive to the hungry children of the world.

Churches study role of women

The ordination of women is under study by the Lutheran Church in Australia. The church asked its female constituency for their views on the subject, as well as on the larger issue of the role of women in the church. Initial responses indicated that the "overwhelming majority" affirmed that "women are created equal to men in being but different in function."

Meanwhile, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong has decided to ordain women, after more than a year of intensive debate.

Help women support one another, O Lord, even in the midst of changing roles and attitudes.

ELCA holds first Churchwide Assembly

The first ELCA Churchwide Assembly will be held August 23-30, 1983, in Chicago. Delegates will consider such complex issues as gay ordination, a study of ministry, inclusiveness and others.

Lord of the church, guide the assembly delegates to wise decisions.

Summer event confronts justice issues

Many Lutherans are meeting July 28-30 in Waukesha, Wisconsin, for the annual summer event of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America. Formed in 1972, the organization confronts racism, sexism and other forms of injustice and oppression.

Arouse us from our apathy, Lord, and instill us with a zeal for justice.

Read your daily newspaper, build a prayer list to be reviewed, and let your needs change.

Sonia C. Groenewold is news editor of The Lutheran.

MISSION:

Community

Speakers' Bureau Supports Cross-Cultural Programming

in Christ," the domestic cross-cultural emphasis of Women of the ELCA was launched in March with 110 national women's organization representatives attending. The program focused on meeting, and growing in understanding of, the Native American community.

Second "One in Christ" event was held in September this year, focusing on the Asian community. Participants will be Mission: Community representatives in the synodical organization.

Participants in these events will form the core of the Women of the ELCA speakers' bureau, to which speakers will be added as other events take place. By arranging with the speaker, presenters available to address congregations and intercongregational units, dioceses and conferences, and synodical women's organizations about

their cross-cultural experiences. A list of speakers and guidelines for inviting organizations are available from the churchwide Women of the ELCA office (see address in box).

"One in Christ" is a tremendous educational and experiential opportunity for women as they grow in cross-cultural understanding. Speakers are committed to giving 25 presentations over a two-year period and are eager to share their experiences. Inviting organizations pay the speaker's mileage and expenses.

Extending your invitation to other units to attend a speaker's presentation will help share the cross-cultural emphasis with a wider audience, use the speaker's time and talent effectively, and encourage community with other women.

*Bonnie Belasic
Director of Communications/
Stewardship Interpretation*

For more information about the Women of the ELCA speakers' bureau, or to obtain a list of current speakers, write to:

*Speakers' Bureau
Women of the ELCA
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631.*



MISSION: *Growth*

1990 Bible Study in LWT

Women who undertake the 1990 Bible study in *Lutheran Woman Today* will be embarking on an exciting journey of faith. The Bible study will help them to discover from biblical stories some of the ways that God interacts with people on their behalf, and to make connections to the lives of women today.

Titled "Companions on Your Journey," the 12-session study highlights women of the Bible who were instruments of God as they revealed God's steadfast love in their communities. The study will be divided into three subsections, or modules, of four sessions each.

The first module, a four-session study on the Book of Ruth, challenges women to explore and appreciate Ruth's commitment to Naomi's community. The second module draws from several New Testament books and looks at women's partnership roles in the early Christian community. The study ends with four sessions on Mary, the mother of Jesus, culminating in the December issue with a special Christmas focus.

The writers of *Companions on Your Journey*, Louise Williams and Phyllis Kersten, offer participants an opportunity to examine their own

understandings of faithfulness, commitment and steadfast love. Both authors bring experience in working with women and congregations in their writing task. Louise Williams is a deaconess and executive director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association; Phyllis Kersten is vice-president for communications of Willow Ridge Foundation, an organization of Lutherans supporting ministries of healing service.

Companions also supports the Ecumenical Decade for Church and Solidarity with Women, a worldwide interdenominational program which seeks to enhance and affirm women's contributions in the church. The study book will appear in the January through December 1990 issues of *Lutheran Woman Today*, and is available only in the magazine.

Contact your LWT congregational group coordinator to order or renew your subscription to LWT (or subscribe individually using the form on the inside back cover.) Supplements will also be available for the 1990 Bible Study. See the box on the next page for ordering information.

Ivis LaRiviere-Mestre
Director for Educational
Resources

The 1990 Bible study, Companions on Your Journey, will begin in the January issue of LWT

Companions on Your Journey Supplementary Resources

Leader guide	2-9026	\$2.85 (available Fall 1989)
Resource book	2-9025	\$3.50 (available Fall 1989)

Check your 1989-1990 Women of the ELCA Catalog or contact your nearest Augsburg Fortress location for order information.

Resource book on audiotape for the visually impaired will be available in November for \$6.00, produced by the ELCA Braille and Tape Service. The three-tape set may be ordered from Augsburg Fortress Audiovisual Dept., 426 S. Fifth St., Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440. Checks should be made payable to Augsburg Fortress.

MISSION:

Action

LITERACY: One Part of a Larger Picture

Various estimates, 20, 23, or 27 million people in the United States are illiterate. At least *one billion* people in the world are illiterate. So? Are statistics so important? And of themselves, no. If they catch your attention and make you want to change the situation, yes! For the illiterate, however, statistics are irrelevant. For many, the question is, Why should I become literate? If I learn to sign my name and some words—will that alone make me live better? If I learn to read enough to fill out a job application, is that enough to get a job? What about the job interview? What about the proper clothes, transportation and money just to get to the interview?

That's what new readers say about becoming literate: "I feel good about education. Once you get a bit of it, you want more. It's like food." "I don't have to depend on another person anymore. I can read

and write English all by myself." "My boss says he can tell I've improved 100 percent. I can read an instructional manual now." "I'm 28 years old and I can read and write now. I love reading books. The future's so bright you've got to wear shades!"

The self-confidence that becoming literate builds cannot be underestimated. But with that self-confidence comes newfound hopes and expectations. Are we as ready to enable and nurture the expectations as we are to give the gift of reading? If not, we have given a bittersweet gift.

When we talk about the gift of literacy, we must speak to the whole person. Literacy must be a part of a larger picture that will close the gap between the haves and have-nots in today's society. With the gift of reading must also come the gift of the knowledge of empowerment. ■

*Faith Fretheim
Director for Literacy*



MEDITATION

KRISTIN HENRY

THE GOOD EARTH

(In recognition of "Voices of Creation"—an ELCA emphasis for August, 1988)

I'm a city kid. Even during those years when business took my Dad into a rural area, we were "townies." When I think of land, I think of lots rather than sections, gardens rather than fields. But whether you live in the country or a city, when it comes to the land, the same principles apply. The earth is both our legacy and our labor; our continuing responsibility and our hope for the future.

God's Word has made us stewards over this earth—caretakers, nurturers and helpers who cooperate with it to bring about a gentle productivity. When we honor this relationship, the land gives us what we need. Its richness supplies food, clothing, shelter and even medicine to keep us warm and dry and healthy. When our spirits hunger for beauty, the materials for creating it are found in our earth's clay and wood, stone and reed.

If hardship and weariness sometimes take the joy from life, our eyes and ears can feast on the majesty and wonder God put into the natural world. In all ways, it seems, God has

created this world for us to learn and learn from, to tend and be tended by.

Even our very lives come from elements of earth. When God made the first person from the dust by the riverbank—creatively and lovingly rearranging the chemicals and minerals, neutrons and protons that make up our planet—humankind came into being. There is nothing physical in us that is foreign to Earth; nothing that wasn't here from the land itself.

Truly, we are the land's and its ours. God blessed the creation of the land and those things that are because of it, by declaring it good. May we do our utmost, likewise, to bless this creation, this earth, keeping it good. ■

Free-lance writer Kristin Henry is an active member of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Bellevue, Washington, an English tutor for foreign students, and works with a group that helps substance-abusing tee

Editor:

Nancy J. Stelling

Associate Editor:

Sue Edison-Swift

Editorial Secretary:

Renee G. Elms

Production Editor:

Ann Harrington

Graphic Design:

Lilja-Baehr Design

On the front cover

Calder's *Mobile* symbolizes the need for both flexibility and stability in life. A gentle touch or a gust of wind will launch it into motion: swinging, dipping, bending. It must move or it will break. The base provides stability through any turbulence, just as God provides stability when we face changes in our lives.

Mobile, Alexander Calder; Collection Walker Art Center, Minnesota. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon, 1955.

Art and photos: Tom Boll, 1; Sharon Somers, 2, 3, 4, 19; Blaine Thrall, 9; Lilja-Baehr Design, 10, 29, 34-37, 48; Kate Brennan Hall, 16, 17; Hanson, 30, 31; Marilyn Nolt, 39.

Call to Ban the **lastic-Foam** up

ce the February 1989 issue, LWT has learned that there is such a thing as a "Styrofoam cup." Styrofoam is a brand name of the Dow Chemical company. Styrofoam is a plastic-foam product used only for construction and craft purposes; it is not molded into cups, egg cartons or food packaging. The term "plastic-foam cups" should have been used in the article, and LWT regrets its misuse of the Styrofoam brand name.

If you or your group has taken the action to reduce consumption of plastic-foam products as a result of the article, write the *ENT* editorial offices at 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631.

LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY AVAILABLE IN BRAILLE, ON TAPE

Lutheran Woman Today is available in braille and on tape for persons with visual or other physical disabilities. For further information about these resources, or to learn how you can support this ministry, write the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440, or call 1-800-328-4648 (in Minnesota, 1-800-752-8153.)

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- ◆ *A Light to My Path: A Study of the Gospel of John*, a Bible study by Nancy and Craig Koester
- ◆ Interdependence
- ◆ Profiles of the women of Church Women United
- ◆ A Thankoffering service

cut here

Individual subscriptions at \$6.50 (\$10.00 big print) may be sent to:

Lutheran Woman Today Circulation

426 South 5th Street, Box 1209
Minneapolis, MN 55440

(Group subscriptions may be available in your congregation.)

SCRIPTION FOR _____

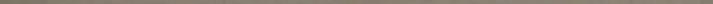
STATE _____ ZIP _____

send a gift card from _____

(name and address)

regular print \$6.50 big print \$10.00

\$3.00 for addresses outside North America

Check Visa Mastercard American Express
Card 

Card exp. date: _____ Signature: _____

(All credit card orders must be signed)



Flexibility

An openness to change and the ability to allow for diversity in functioning shall be among the desired results of the structure of this organization. Change shall be viewed as an ongoing process following regular review and evaluation. The process for changing procedures and policies shall be clearly stated and uncomplicated.

Stability

The principle of good order shall be followed. Policies and procedures shall be held in healthy tension with the principle of flexibility.

Principles of Women of the EL
Constitution and Byla

#580AXXXXXXXXXXXXX 3-DIGIT 947
#90002484217# SRP COMP HX
GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL
UNION LIBRARY
2451 RIDGE
BERKELEY
CA 94709

6609

